

6. On a Fifth Collection of Birds made by the Rev. G. Brown, C.M.Z.S., on Duke-of-York Island and in its Vicinity. By P. L. SCLATER, M.A., Ph.D., F.R.S., Secretary to the Society¹.

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(Plates VI.—VIII.)

I have again the pleasure of laying before the Society a collection of bird-skins formed by the Rev. G. Brown, our Corresponding Member at Duke-of-York Island. The series on this occasion is not large, but there are several specimens of interest in it.

The following is a list of the species represented in it. They are all from Kabakadai, on the coast of New Britain.

1. *Megalurus interscapularis*, sp. nov.
2. *Pœcilodryas æthiops*, sp. nov.
3. *Myzomela cineracea*, Sclater.
4. *Munia melæna*, sp. nov.
5. *Corvus orru*, Bp.
6. *Dendrochelidon mystacea* (Less.).
7. *Halcyon sancta*, Vig. et Horsf.
8. *Eclectus polychlorus* (Scop.).
9. *Falco severus*, Horsf.
10. *Rallus pectoralis*, Less.
11. *Rallus insignis*, sp. nov.
12. *Amaurornis moluccana* (Wallace).
13. *Nycticorax caledonicus* (Gm.).

The new species may be described as follows:—

1. *MEGALURUS INTERSCAPULARIS*, sp. nov. (Plate VI.)

Suprà terreno-brunneus, pileo antico rufescente; interscapulio nigro flammulato; alis intùs nigricantibus, remigum marginibus externis pallidè rufescentibus et fusco obsoletè transfasciatis; subtùs albus, lateribus et crisso in fuscum transeuntibus; caudâ pallidè fuscâ, e rectricibus rigidis et valdè graduatis compositâ, harum scapis nigricantibus; rostro corneo, ad basin albicante; pedibus corylinis. Long. tota 8, alæ 2·8, caudæ rectr. ext. 1·9, med. 4·3, tarsi 1.

Hab. in ins. Novâ Britannîâ (Brown).

This bird belongs apparently to the genus *Megalurus*, and is allied to *M. galactodes* of Australia²; but is distinguishable by its larger size, the want of superciliary stripes, and the body being white below. I can only detect *eight* tail-feathers; but it is quite probable that two external ones may have been lost.

¹ See report on the first collection, P. Z. S. 1877, p. 96, second collection, P. Z. S. 1878, p. 289, third collection, P. Z. S. 1878, p. 670, and fourth collection, P. Z. S. 1879, p. 446.

² *Sphenæacus galactodes*, Gould, B. Austr. iii. pl. xxxv.

2. *PÆCILODRYAS ÆTHIOPS*, sp. nov. (Plate VII. fig. 1.)

Nigerrima; *maculâ scapularium utrinque, uropygio et crisso albis*; *rostro et pedibus nigris*; *caudâ longiusculâ, paululum rotundatâ*; *remigibus tertio et quarto æqualibus*. *Long. tota 5·2, alæ 2·9, caudæ 2·2.*

Hab. in Novâ Britannîâ (*Brown*).

This bird, which is quite new to me, is very recognizable by its uniform black plumage only broken by the white patch on the scapulars, and the white upper and under tail-coverts, and reminds one of *Pratincola caprata*. Count T. Salvadori, to whom I sent it for inspection, reminds me that it comes nearest to his *P. bimaculata* of New Guinea.

4. *MUNIA MELÆNA*, sp. nov. (Plate VII. fig. 2.)

Niger; *uropygio, caudæ tectricibus superioribus et rectricum marginibus externis castaneis*; *caudâ acuminatâ, rectricibus duabus mediis quam cæteræ longioribus*; *ventre medio rufo, hypochondriis nigro variegatis, crisso nigro*; *alis extus et dorso postico fuscescenti-nigris, subalaribus rufescentibus*; *rostro crasso et pedibus nigris*. *Long. tota 4·3, alæ 2, caudæ 1·3.*

Hab. in Novâ Britannîâ (*Brown*).

This species is remarkable for its general black colouring varied only by the chestnut upper tail-coverts and the broad rufous patch on the belly. Its bill is stronger even than in *M. forbesi*.

11. *RALLUS INSIGNIS*, sp. nov. (Plate VIII.)

Suprà saturatè fuscescenti-oleagineus; *pileo, capitis lateribus et cervicali posticâ rufo perfusus*; *subtus niger, fasciis angustis albis usque ad medium ventrem instructus*; *alis nigricantibus, albo intus transfasciatis, secundariis externis dorso concoloribus*; *rostro nigro, pedibus carneis*. *Long. tota 12, alæ 5·4, caudæ 1·3, rostri a rictu 1·8, tarsi 2·7.*

Hab. in Novâ Britannîâ (*Brown*).

This fine large Rail is a southern form of *R.* (sive *Hypotænidia*) *celebensis*, from which it differs in the want of any white markings on the sides of the head, the rufous cap, the longer stronger bill, and the want of any bars on the under tail-coverts. I have compared it with the types of *R. sulcirostris*, Wallace, P. Z. S. 1862, p. 345 (from the Sula Islands); but that is also a perfectly distinct species. The tail is unfortunately imperfect.

Besides the skins, Mr. Brown sends a small collection of birds in spirit, of which the exact localities are not stated. It contains a second example of *Munia hemimelana*, also specimens of *Donacicola spectabilis* and *Cisticola ruficeps*, and of several other species.

The skin of *Eclectus polychlorus* is of much interest, as it is that of a nestling bird, and in the green plumage, and shows that as regards this much vexed species the male is green from the nest. I assume that the specimen is a male, although the sex has unfortunately not been determined.

As regards the *Collocalia* left undetermined in my account of Mr. Brown's last collection (see P. Z. S. 1879, p. 447, sp. 12), Count Salvadori has kindly examined the specimen and favoured me with the subjoined remarks :—

“Through the kindness of Mr. Tristram I have been able to examine the specimen from the Solomon Islands, attributed by him to *C. linchi* (Ibis, 1879, p. 438); and I find that it belongs to the group containing *C. francisca* (Gm.), with the upper parts dark, almost black, and with the underparts uniformly grey. Therefore most probably it does not belong to *C. linchi*, Horsf., which appertains to the *Collocalia esculenta* group. It seems to me that the Solomon-Island specimen belongs to *C. fuciphaga* (Thunb.)¹. I can only notice that it has the upper parts blacker, and the underparts of a lighter and purer grey than Javan, Bornean, Amboina, and Kei-Islands specimens of *C. fuciphaga*.

“A specimen from the Duke-of-York Island submitted to my examination by Mr. Sclater (*Collocalia* sp. inc., P. Z. S. 1879, p. 447), belongs to the same species as Mr. Tristram's specimen.”

February 17, 1880.

Prof. W. H. Flower, F.R.S., President, in the Chair.

The Secretary made the following report on the additions to the Society's Menagerie during January 1880 :—

The total number of registered additions to the Society's Menagerie during the month of January was 89, of which 57 were by presentation, 28 by purchase, 1 was received in exchange, and 3 on deposit. The total number of departures during the same period, by death and removals, was 84.

The most noticeable additions during the month were :—

1. A Japanese Hawk-Eagle (*Spizaetus orientalis*)², from Japan, being the first individual of this scarce bird of prey we have received. It was presented to us by our Corresponding Member, Harry Pryer, Esq., of Yokohama, and arrived, under the kind care of Mr. Maries, on January 6.

2. Two Blue-eyed Cockatoos (*Cacatua ophthalmica*), presented by the Rev. George Brown, C.M.Z.S., of Duke-of-York Island. This acquisition is of much interest, as the species was hitherto believed to be peculiar to the Solomon Islands. Mr. Brown, who transmitted these birds to Mr. Ramsay's care in Sydney in September 1877, along with a pair of the *Eclectus* (which unfortunately died at Sydney), tells me that this Cockatoo is found in New Britain, but not in New Ireland.

I take this opportunity of exhibiting a drawing by Mr. Smit (Plate

¹ “I cannot agree with Lord Walden, who (Ibis, 1874, p. 135) considers *C. linchi*, Horsf., to be the same as *C. fuciphaga*, Thunb.”

² Temm. et Schl. Fauna Japonica, Aves, p. 7, pl. iii. Mr. Sharpe (Cat. B. i. p. 267) identifies this species with *S. nipalensis* of India; but I am not quite sure that this identification is correct.